

REMARKS

Claims 2-4 and 16-18 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant proposes canceling claims 1, 5-13, and 15, without prejudice or disclaimer, and rewriting dependent claims 2 and 16 in independent form in order to place all of the pending claims in condition for allowance. No new matter has been added.

Applicant takes this opportunity to thank the Examiner for indicating that dependent claims 2-4 and 16-18 contain allowable subject matter. As mentioned above, Applicant proposes rewriting each of dependent claims 2 and 16 in independent form to place this application in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered, placing all pending claims 2-4 and 16-18 in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that the proposed amendments of claims 2 and 16 do not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships were previously claimed. Therefore, timely issuance of a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested.

The final Office Action contains a number of statements and characterizations regarding the claims and the related art. Applicant declines to subscribe automatically to any statement or characterization in the final Office Action, regardless of whether it is addressed above.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned (571-203-2735) if a telephone conversation might advance prosecution of the application.

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Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 23, 2003

By: 

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